

REMARKS

This is a response to the Office Action mailed on June 30, 2004 with a shortened statutory response period that ends on September 30, 2004. This response is submitted within the statutory period. Claims 12 and 18-33 and 35-48 are pending in this application. Claim 34 has been canceled. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees to Deposit Account number 02-1818.

The proposed drawing amendment submitted on April 27, 2004 was disapproved by the Examiner because new drawing Figure 13a allegedly showed pulley 182 in contact with the edge of box 100 which would prevent its function. Figure 13a has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's recommendation. Presently amended Figure 13a schematically depicts a support 183 for pulley 182. While pulley 182 and support 183 are shown in one discrete location by necessity, pulley 182 and support 183 may be connected to any location on the box. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added as a result of this drawing amendment.

Claims 12, 18-28, 36-38, and 18-28, 36-38, 41 and 46-48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 2nd paragraph as being indefinite as the subject matter being claimed is allegedly unclear. In particular, it is alleged that it is unclear whether the claimed hanger system includes the box and the flexible container. Independent claims 12, 18, 36-38 have been amended to clearly articulate the subject matter of the invention. The scope of these claims has not been narrowed nor has new matter been introduced as a result of these amendments. Applicants respectfully submit that the §112 rejections be withdrawn.

Claims 12, 18-20, 22, 24-30, 32, 34, 37, 39, 41-44, 46 and 47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,527,716 to Haas et al. (*Haas*). Claims 12 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,306,668 to Love (*Love*). Claims 35, 45 and 48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over *Haas*. Claims 12, 20, 21, 23, 29-31, 33 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,788,121 to Sasaki et al. (*Sasaki*) in view of *Love*. Applicants respectfully traverse and disagree with these rejections as no combination of *Haas*, *Love* and *Sasaki* teaches or suggests the subject matter recited in the present claims.

Haas and *Love* each teach away from a hanger system that includes a flexible container that defines a sterile barrier to the interior of the container as recited in independent claims 12,

29, and 37 and claims depending therefrom. *Haas* discloses that an overhead center support hook "impales" the upper portion of the liner. *Haas*, col. 3 lines 19-21, col. 4 lines 4-6. The skilled artisan would immediately recognize that an impaled or otherwise pierced liner cannot provide a sterile barrier to the container interior. Similarly, *Love* discloses a flexible bag having a screen ventilator as well as loading/discharge tubes that are merely tied closed. *Love*, col. 3 line 4, col. 3 lines 22-31, Figure 2. The skilled artisan would recognize that a bag having a screen ventilator or tied loading/discharge tubes and would not form a sterile barrier to the bag interior. Consequently, *Haas* and *Love* each teach away from a container that defines a sterile barrier to the interior of the container.

Furthermore, *Love* teaches away from a rigid box as recited in independent claims 12, 18, 29, and 36-38. Conversely, the *Love* structure includes a grid of flexible webbing that is extended between four vertical posts which permits outward bulging of the inner bag. *Love*, col. 2 lines 15-16. The flexible webbed "sidewalls" of *Love*'s structure teach away from the rigid box recited in the present claims.

Sasaki has no disclosure whatsoever directed to means for upwardly biasing the top portion of a flexible container. In addition, *Sasaki* discloses that the bag volume is less than the box volume. *Sasaki*, col. 19 line 49 through col. 20 line 2. Moreover, the *Sasaki* bag has a volume of about 20 liters thereby teaching away from a flexible container having a volume of at least 200 liters. *Sasaki*, col. 18 lines 4-6.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the patent application is in condition for allowance and request a Notice of Allowance be issued.

Respectfully submitted,

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Amendments To The Drawings:

Please replace the replacement sheet submitted on April 23, 2004 showing FIGS. 13 and 13a with the present replacement sheet showing FIGS. 13 and 13a. The present replacement sheet amends Fig. 13a to include pulley 182 supported by support 183.

Attachments: Replacement Sheet (1)